



DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC SAFETY
MINNESOTA
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



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Welcome to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety *State Fire Marshal Division 2015 Annual Report*. The information in this report was for many years included as a portion of the State Fire Marshal Division's (SFMD) *Fire in Minnesota* publication, which consisted mainly of statistics. Last year we decided to outline the SFMD staff's diverse accomplishments in a stand-alone report. The feedback was tremendous and positive.

The SFMD turned 110 years old in 2015. We're proud of that milestone and take seriously our job of serving the Minnesota fire service, Minnesota residents and visitors of this great state. Fire safety, fire prevention and exceptional customer service will continue to be cornerstones of the way we do business. We have already been working hard this year on enhancing the future of public safety in Minnesota, but here's a preview of some facts you'll find in this report that show what we accomplished last year.

School inspections

- Emergency planning evaluations were completed in one-third of the state's public schools. Schools are inspected on a three-year cycle.

Health care inspections

- 401 health care facilities and 151 Department of Corrections facilities were inspected.

Residential care and lodging inspections

- All mandatory hotel/motel and Department of Human Services (DHS)-required fire safety inspections were completed.

Fire investigations

- Investigators responded to 465 fires. The team also conducted basic and advanced fire and arson investigation training statewide.

Data collection

- Minnesota continues to lead the nation in fire reporting rates with 99 percent of departments submitting data via the Minnesota Fire Incident Reporting System.

We will work hard to build on these successes in 2016. As your state fire marshal, I am proud to provide you with the State Fire Marshal Division 2015 Annual Report. Thank you for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce West". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Bruce West
State Fire Marshal

MINNESOTA STATE FIRE MARSHAL HISTORICAL TIME LINE

1905

Legislation authorizing governor to appoint state fire marshal for two-year term. Funding through tax levy on insurance companies.

1907

Amendment authorizing two deputy state fire marshals. Authorization to pay fire departments \$1 for reports submitted to the state fire marshal.

1913

All former acts repealed and new State Fire Marshal Department was created. Governor appointed fire marshal and two deputies.

1919

The appointing authority was given to the Commissioner of Insurance.

1970

The State Fire Marshal Department moved into the Department of Public Safety to be known as the State Fire Marshal Division (SFMD). Gene Weber transfers from the Insurance Commission to DPS to be the state fire marshal.

1972

Health care inspection program begins through a contract with the state health department. Wes Werner is appointed state fire marshal.

1975

Legislature adopted Minnesota's first fire code. (October) — Minnesota Uniform Fire Code (MUFC) adopted the 1973 edition of the Uniform Fire Code (UFC).

1977 (January 28)

17 people killed in a fire at Stratford Hotel in Breckenridge, Minn.

1977

State Fire Marshal Division receives a \$20,000 grant from the National Fire Prevention and Control Administration (now the U.S. Fire Administration) to implement the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). Minnesota becomes one of the first states to participate.

1925

Legislative action made the Commissioner of Insurance the Ex-Officio State Fire Marshal.

1937

Tax levy to fund the State Fire Marshal Department was raised to 1/2 percent of all insurance premiums to include Town Fire Insurance Company and Farmers Mutual.

1941

Legislature directed all monies collected by the State Fire Marshal for tax and license fees, etc., to be turned over to the General Fund. Fire Marshal Department to be operated under an appropriation by legislative action.

1969

Legislative action created a Department of Public Safety.

1978-79

Legislative action enabled local fire departments to enforce the MUFC without local adoption.

1978

Ten positions added to implement hotel/ motel/resort inspection program as a result of the Stratford Hotel fire and others.

1979 (May)

First national fire incident reporting system conference is held in Minnesota.

1980

Minnesota is the first state in the nation to require smoke alarms in new and rental residential properties. Three fire code specialists were added.

1983 (April)

MUFC updated to 1982 edition of the UFC.

1987 (March)

Thomas Brace appointed state fire marshal.

1989

Three more positions were added to the SFMD: Two day care inspectors and one fire safety educator. The first edition of the Fire in Minnesota annual report is released. (October) — MUFC updated to 1988 edition of the UFC

1990

Legislation added five new positions to the SFMD to conduct school inspections in Minnesota.

1992

New program added to license fire sprinkler contractors, designers, and fitters. New program to develop operation of Hazardous Material Response Teams.

1998

As a result of the Arson Task Force, two new positions were added to the SFMD: One arson investigation trainer and one juvenile fire setter interventionist. (June) — MUFC updated to 1997 edition of UFC. One inspector for the Fire Protection Team was added.

1993

Legislative action updated arson statutes. Legislation requires a smoke alarm in every dwelling (new and existing). (August) MUFC updated to 1991 edition of the UFC.

1995

Licensing of operators of public fireworks displays. One fire investigator position added.

1996

The Attorney General formed a task force to study the crime of arson in Minnesota. The division received a federal grant of \$400,000 to study arson as it relates to the criminal or abusive use of alcohol and/or drugs.

1999

The arson data specialist position was filled. Legislation added funding for a part-time code specialist position, to be hired in FY 01.

2000

National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) — Version 5 introduced and implementation begun.

2003 (March)

Fire code changed to adopt the 2000 edition of the International Fire Code (IFC); became known as the Minnesota State Fire Code (MSFC). (June) — Jerry Rosendahl appointed state fire marshal.

2005 (April)

100th anniversary of the State Fire Marshal Division.

2007 (July)

MSFC updated to 2006 edition of the IFC.

2008

Online fire reporting software system purchased for fire departments to use. Minnesota is the first state fire marshal to have such a system.

2009 (January 1)

All fire reporting to meet NFIRS Version 5 (electronic reporting).

2012 (August 1)

Fire protection system demonstration Trailer placed into service

2013 (December)

Bruce West appointed state fire marshal.

2014 (September)

25th anniversary of *Fire in Minnesota* is published using an updated format.

2015 (April)

110th anniversary of the State Fire Marshal Division.

MINNESOTA STATE FIRE MARSHAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART – STAFFING

Special Services and Projects

BRUCE ROED

Fire Service Specialist

NANCI LIBOR

Recruitment and
Retention Program

BARB LUNDBERG

Clerical Supervisor

CLERICAL TEAM

Danay Freeman
Angela Kappenman
Annette Lindquist
Randi Samuelson
Marian Whitney

GLEN BERGSTRAND

Fire Safety Supervisor

RESIDENTIAL CARE AND LODGING TEAM

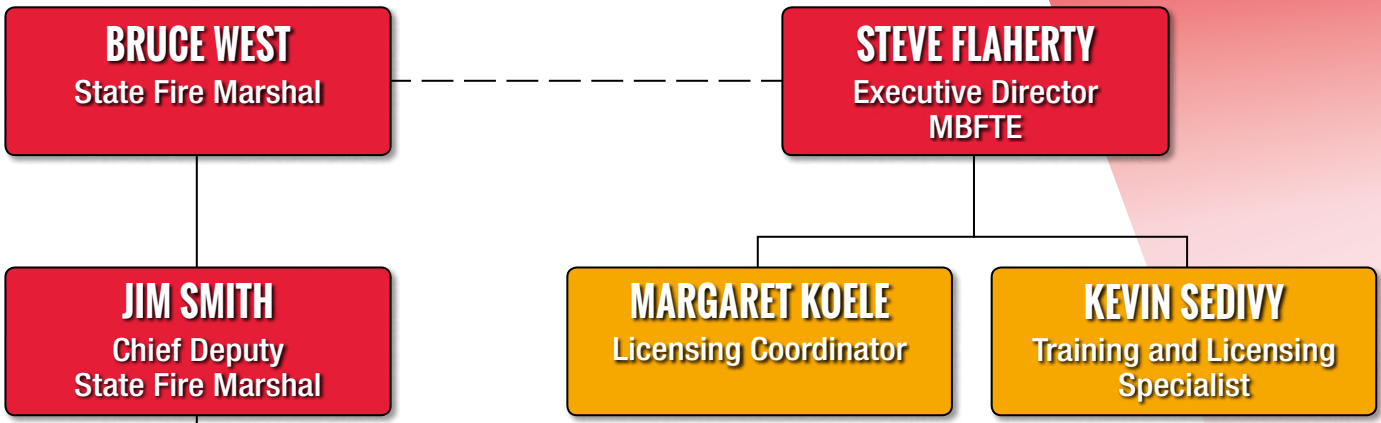
Dan Beeson
Floyd Cupkie
Robert Rexeisen
George Shellum
Richard Sorensen
Chris Watson
Ryan Whiting

FORREST WILLIAMS

Fire Safety Supervisor

SCHOOL TEAM

Joe Faust
Kurt Kastella
Brad Lundquist
John Swanson



TOM LINHOFF
Fire Safety Supervisor

JON NISJA
Fire Safety Supervisor

JIM IAMMATTEO
Chief Investigator

- HEALTH CARE TEAM**
 James Anderson
 William Abderhalden
 Bob Baumann
 Larry Gannon
 Roy Kingsley
 Brian Tonnancour
 Kimberly Swenson
 Kerry Queen

- INFORMATION MANAGEMENT TEAM**
 Nora Gierok
 Joel Paylor
 Scott Radke

- FIRE PROTECTION TEAM**
 Dan Kaiser
 Ryan Kunst
 Ralph Peterson

- STATE FIRE CODE TEAM**
 Tom Jenson
 (Code Specialist)
 Kevin McGinty
 (Code Training and Development)

- PUBLIC EDUCATION/YOUTH FIRE SETTING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION (YFPI)**
 Amanda Swenson
 (Fire/Life Safety Educator)
 Kathi Osmonson
 (YFPI Specialist)

- FIRE INVESTIGATION TEAM**
 Mark Germain
 Steve Kellen
 Kevin Mahle
 Toby McLain
 Bruce McLaughlin
 Ron Rahman
 Rich Sellman
 John Steinbach
 Casey Stotts
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FIRE CODE TEAM

About

The Fire Code Team provides fire code information, guidance in the development of state fire code and training on fire code provisions. The team is staffed by two full-time employees and a part-time supervisor. These three employees have a combined 75 years of experience in fire code adoption and enforcement.

Meet the team

Jon Nisja | Supervisor

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7204 or jon.nisja@state.mn.us

Tom Jenson | Fire Code Specialist

Location: St. Paul

Duties: Conducts plan reviews for new and existing buildings, fire investigations and fire and life safety education

Contact: 651-201-7221 or thomas.jenson@state.mn.us

Kevin McGinty | Code Training and Development Specialist

Location: St. Paul

Duties: Oversees fire code development and fire prevention-related training for the SFMD

Contact: 651-201-7219 or kevin.mcginity@state.mn.us

What they do

The team's mission is to save lives and property, reduce business interruption and minimize the environmental impact from fire and hazardous materials. The Fire Code Team provides fire safety regulations that can be used throughout Minnesota to help reduce the number and severity of fires.

Since the 1975 adoption of a fire code in Minnesota, fire deaths have dropped dramatically. The fire code is a tool for state and local fire officials to improve fire and life safety in buildings and facilities. We hope to continue reducing fire deaths in Minnesota through refinement and enforcement of the fire code.



Best of 2015

State fire code adoption

The State Fire Marshal Division is responsible for developing the technical requirements of the Minnesota State Fire Code. The formal, legal adoption is accomplished in cooperation with the Department of Labor and Industry (the agency responsible for adopting the state building code).

Fire code questions – 2015			
Month	Method received		
	Phone	E-mail	Total
January	73	115	188
February	89	124	213
March	98	147	245
April	93	105	198
May	76	114	190
June	90	141	231
July	84	134	218
August	89	110	199
September	77	124	201
October	81	123	204
November	49	124	173
December	70	105	175
Totals	969	1,466	2,435

Last year was a busy one as the division was working on the adoption of the 2015 Minnesota State Fire Code. The adoption process is complete, and the new edition of the Minnesota State Fire Code should be effective by mid-2016.

2015 by the numbers

The team prides itself on same-day responses for code questions or at least answering questions within 24 hours

- Code questions answered:
 - 2015: 2,435
 - 2014: 1,900
 - 2013: 1,700
- Most common methods for questions:
 - Telephone (40 percent) or email (60 percent)

The team anticipates more questions this year after the 2015 State Fire Code is adopted. In addition to the two full-time staff and part-time supervisor, five other members of the division monitor and respond to fire code emails.

Fire code and fire protection training

State fire code staff worked with the fire protection staff to provide training opportunities to fire departments, fire protection contractors, fire and building code officials and architects.

SFMD staff provided 148 hours of training to more than 1,600 attendees on fire prevention and fire safety in 2015 at locations across the state and at fire inspection conferences, including the annual State Fire Marshal Conference.

Did you know?

Last year marked the 40th anniversary of Minnesota's statewide fire code.



FIRE DATA AND EDUCATION TEAM

About

The Fire Data and Education Team has four primary functions:

- Collection and analysis of statewide fire data.
- Publication of Fire in Minnesota.
- Fire and life safety education.
- Youth firesetting prevention and intervention.

Meet the team

Jon Nisja | Supervisor

Contact: 651-201-7204 or jon.nisja@state.mn.us

Nora Gierok | Office and Admin Specialist

Duties: Manages the state fire reporting system, coordinates the Fire in Minnesota report, serves as point of contact for the federal fire reporting system.

Contact: 651-201-7209 or nora.gierok@state.mn.us

Joel Paylor | Office and Admin Specialist

Duties: Manages the SFMD vehicle fleet, arranges travel and training, handles data reporting and other administrative support.

Contact: 651-201-7210 or joel.d.paylor@state.mn.us

Scott Radke | State Fire Data Administrator

Duties: Serves as research analyst for fire data and business processes in the SFMD, trains and supports Minnesota fire departments, supports SFMD investigations and inspections teams.

Contact: 651-201-7222 or scott.radke@state.mn.us

Kathi Osmonson | Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention Coordinator

Duties: Coordinates the Minnesota youth firesetting prevention and intervention program, trains and manages intervention teams that assist families in need.

Contact: 651-201-7220 or kathi.osmonson@state.mn.us

Amanda Swenson | Fire and Life Safety Educator

Duties: Coordinates and conducts statewide public fire safety education and awareness programs, develops fire prevention materials, works with media to provide fire prevention information.

Contact: 651-201-7214 or amanda.swenson@state.mn.us

What they do

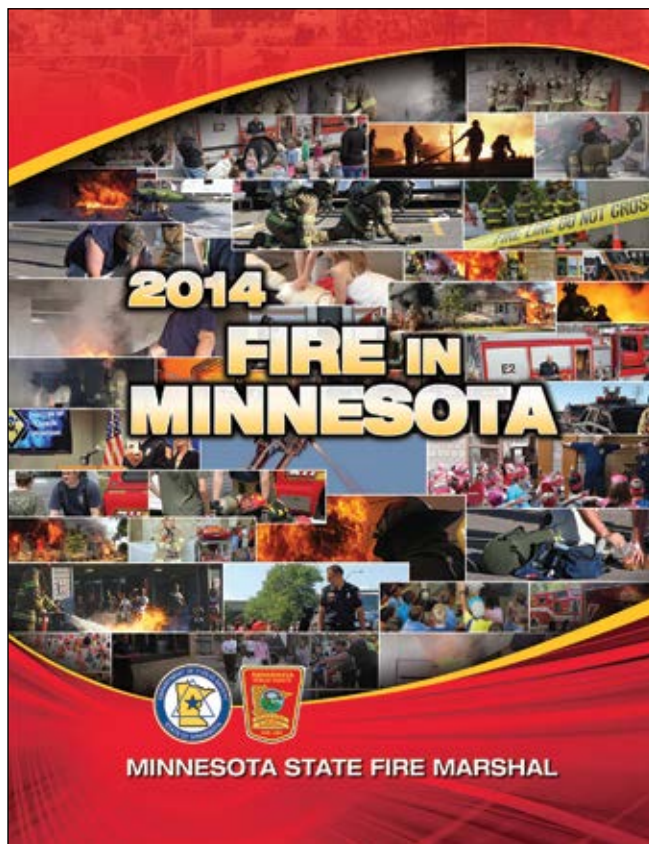
The team's mission is to save lives and property by collecting and analyzing fire-loss data, educating citizens on the dangers of fire, promoting fire-safe behavior, conducting intervention and referrals with youth firesetters and publishing the *Fire in Minnesota* report. The Fire Data and Education Team collects and disseminates fire-related data and information to help make Minnesota a safer place to live, work and play.

The team seeks to learn where fires are occurring and what causes them in an effort to provide prevention-related information to the public through traditional media, social media, fire departments, government agencies and safety-conscious partner organizations and associations.

Best of 2015

Fire in Minnesota

The *Fire in Minnesota* report provides a snapshot of Minnesota's fire problem for the prior year.



The 2014 report provided information on more than 260,000 incidents responded to by 772 fire departments. Included were 12,706 fires doing \$225.7 million in damage.

Copies of *Fire in Minnesota* are available on the division's website — sfm.dps.mn.gov — for download. Printed copies are also available by contacting one of the staff in the fire data section.

Fire and life safety education

In 2015, the team conducted fire prevention education across the state through a variety of venues. Presentations were given to groups such as the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association and the Minnesota State Fire Department Association, as well as at the Minnesota State Fire Marshal Conference in April. Presentations were also given to groups outside of the fire service, such as the Rural Electric Association.

The SFMD continued to be visible throughout the state, meeting with fire departments on fire prevention. Along with presenting directly to fire departments, presentations were given to fire academy students. Topics included fire prevention basics, presentation skills, working with diverse audiences and customizing the fire prevention message to their community.

In 2014, staff added a "For Fire Departments" section to the SFMD website. Customizable fact sheets addressing fire and life safety topics were added for fire departments. In 2015 the fact sheets were updated further to include Somali, Hmong and Spanish translations.

The team also created a fire prevention calendar last year. The calendar included prevention messages, social media messages to give out, historic fire events and fire and life safety awareness campaigns. The calendar was distributed at the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association conference in October.

Staff worked with the Governor's Fire Prevention Day committee to assist in coordinating the event at the Minnesota State Fair. The SFMD booth featured a light-up game board, residential sprinkler quiz and smoke alarm testing. Staff also talked to hundreds of state fair visitors to remind them of the importance of fire prevention.

FIRE DATA AND EDUCATION TEAM

In order to extend the reach of fire prevention messages, staff worked with a number of other organizations and committees to increase prevention knowledge and resources. Staff worked with the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Public Education Committee, Minnesota chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators, Minnesota Fire and Injury Prevention group and Minnesota Safety Council.

The Fire Prevention Newsletter continued monthly through 2015. The newsletter provides a collection of resources and news from fire and life safety sources around the state and country. There are 380 firefighters, fire officers and safety professionals on the newsletter distribution list. If your department is not yet on the list, please email Amanda Swenson at amanda.swenson@state.mn.us. The newsletter is also posted each month on the SFMD website.

Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention

The mission of the division's Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention Program (YFPI) is to identify youth who misuse fire and provide prompt intervention, including referrals as necessary, to reduce the incidence of youth-set fires. In 2015, the division's YFPI program partnered with the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association to develop

regional teams and create a point of contact — the state duty officer — for notifying these teams. These 10 regional teams each have a trained youth fire intervention program manager. To augment these teams, an additional 29 specialists were trained in 2015 and added as resources to address youth-set fires.

The YFPI program managers met together in July to hear presentations from national experts on youth firesetting trends and review the current assessment tools being used.

Expanding on an idea from New Zealand, the YFPI program developed a "Wise-Up" workbook to help fill the need statewide for more educational materials. Hundreds of these workbooks were distributed throughout Minnesota. In addition, an online tutorial was developed with input from professionals with mental health, social services, juvenile justice and fire service backgrounds.

Kathi Osmonson, Minnesota's youth firesetting specialist, worked with others throughout the United States to develop the Youth Firesetting Intervention Repository and Evaluation System (YFIRES). YFIRES is a national data collection initiative designed to show the actual extent of youth firesetting behavior in the United States, including data that has previously been missed in criminal justice and fire incident data systems.

Fire data analysis								
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number FDs	788	787	785	789	785	785	785	782
Reporting FDs	746 (94.6%)	741 (94.1%)	758 (96.5%)	767 (97.2%)	768 (97.8%)	776 (98.8%)	776 (98.8%)	772 (98.7%)
Non-reporting	42 (5.3%)	46 (5.8%)	27 (3.4%)	22 (2.7%)	17 (2.2%)	9 (1.1%)	9 (1.1%)	10 (1.2%)
Software reporting	403 (51.1%)	400 (51.1%)	230 (29.2%)	178 (22.5%)	164 (20.9%)	144 (18.3%)	152 (19.4%)	128 (16.4%)
Paper reporting	343 (43.5%)	341 (43.3%)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Online reporting	n/a	n/a	528 (67.2%)	589 (74.6%)	604 (76.9%)	632 (80.5%)	624 (79.5%)	644 (82.3%)

2015 by the numbers

Fire data analysis

In 2014 and 2015 the division's Fire Data Team collected fire incident reports from 772 of the state's 782 fire departments and compiled the fire loss data into its annual report: Fire in Minnesota — 2014. Fire departments responded to over 260,000 incidents. Due to the volume and complexity of the data, it takes several months to process and compile this into a usable report.

In 2008 the division purchased a fire incident reporting software program to replace the former paper reporting system. This web-based reporting system is used by about 80 percent of the state's fire departments. It has allowed for real-time reporting of fire incident data. The table at the bottom of the page shows the history of fire reporting for the past several years.

The reports submitted from Minnesota's fire departments are checked for quality assurance purposes and then submitted to the United States Fire Administration's National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). The staff also responded to dozens of data and information requests on Minnesota's fire problems and issues from the public, local fire officials, the media and the Legislature.

YFPI referral activity – 2015

Referral Source	Complete Intervention	Refused Intervention	Charges Pending
State Investigators	7	2	1
State Inspectors	0	1	1
Mental Health	3	1	0
Social Services	3	0	0
Juvenile Justice	0	1	0
Family	2	0	0
Fire Departments	10	3	0
Totals	25	8	2

YFPI

The above chart is a breakdown of YFPI referral activity for 2015.

Also during 2015, 10 presentations on youth firesetting were given to over 200 people at various events.

Did you know?

Minnesota's fire departments have one of the highest fire incident reporting percentages in the country?





FIRE INVESTIGATION TEAM

About

The history of fire investigations in Minnesota goes back to the earliest days of the SFMD. When the office of the State Fire Marshal was established in 1905, one of its primary functions was investigating fire origins and causes. Although state statute assigns responsibility for determining origin and cause of fires to the local fire chief, that function remains a high priority for the SFMD to this day, and staff continues to provide investigative services whenever asked by a local FD.

The Fire Investigation Team consists of 11 investigators and one chief investigator. Each investigator works from a home office located in an assigned regional service area. This territory is reviewed regularly to see if changes need to be made to maintain effective response times — typically two to three hours, but it can be longer when weather is a factor.

Meet the team

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Coverage area: Itasca County

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Steve Kellen | Investigator

Location: Wanda

Coverage area: Southwest Minnesota

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Bruce McLaughlin | Investigator

Location: Inver Grove Heights

Coverage area: East Central Minnesota

Contact: 612-716-6886 or bruce.mclaughlin@state.mn.us

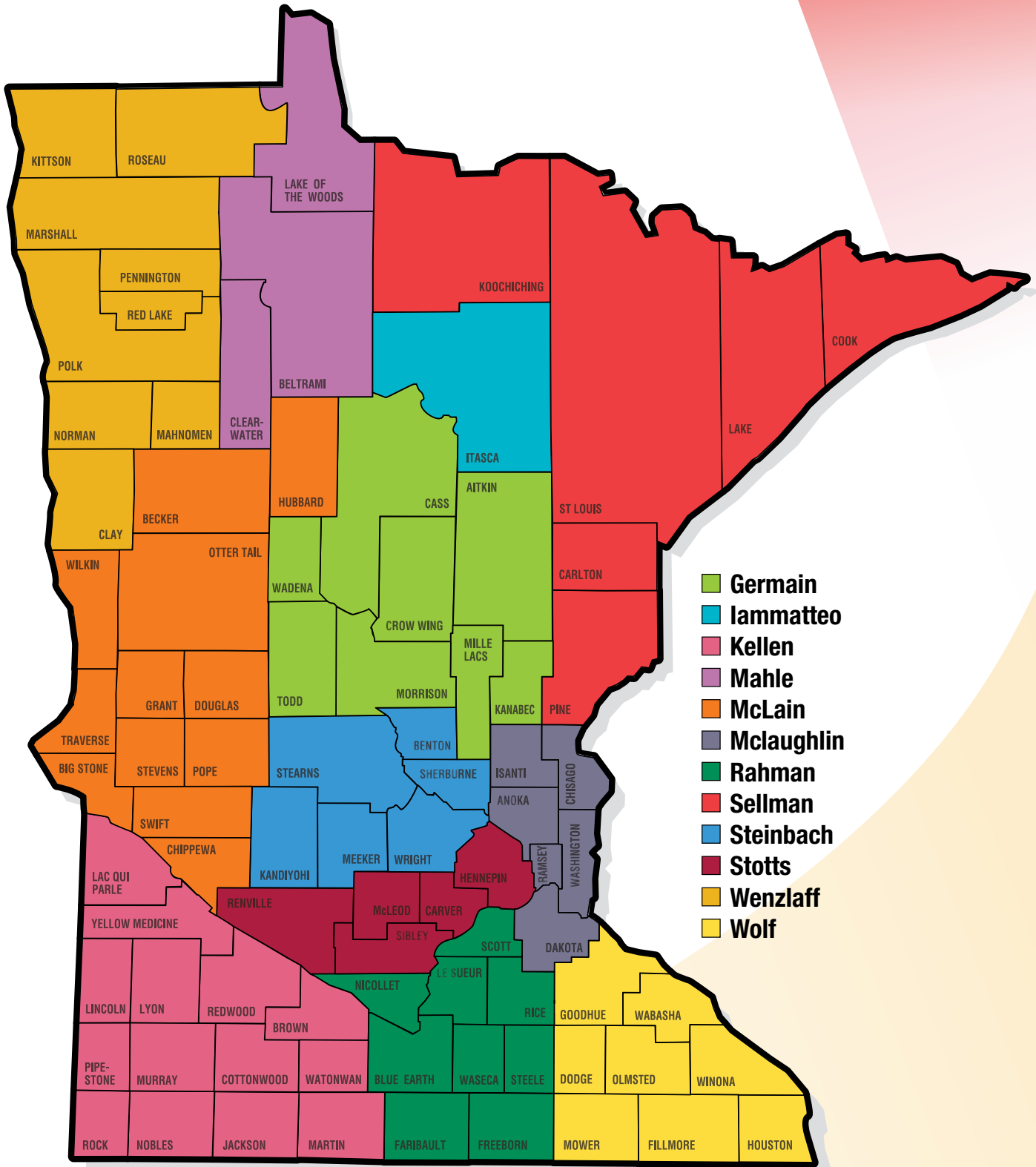
Casey Stotts | Investigator

Location: Hutchinson

Coverage area: South Central Minnesota

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FIRE INVESTIGATION TEAM BY COUNTY



FIRE INVESTIGATION TEAM

Toby McLain | Investigator

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Richard Sellman | Investigator

Location: Chisholm
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Kevin Mahle | Investigator

Location: Bemidji
Coverage area: North Central Minnesota
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Mark Germain | Investigator

Location: Merrifield
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Ron Rahman | Investigator

Location: Northfield
Coverage area: South Central Minnesota
Contact: 612-716-1654 or ronald.rahman@state.mn.us

Andrea Wenzlaff | Investigator

Location: Thief River Falls
Coverage area: Northwestern Minnesota
Contact: 218-684-1007 or andrea.wenzlaff@state.mn.us

John Steinbach | Investigator

Location: New London
Coverage area: Central Minnesota
Contact: 612-710-6825 or john.steinbach@state.mn.us

What they do

The team helps local fire departments determine fire origin and cause and also helps county, state and federal agencies bring arson cases to justice. Investigators help with interviews and interrogation, subpoena documents, and provide other assistance to agencies involved in case resolution. Fire investigation is a complex science, difficult to master but essential to justice. The SFMD's goal has always been to have all investigators trained to the certified fire investigator level, the gold standard in crime investigation, in law enforcement and in the courtroom.

Best of 2015

The team has been working hard to improve and update training offerings. Why? Those improvements will help investigators provide the best customer service possible, whether they're working with someone who has an accidental fire or teaming up with law enforcement on a criminal case. The team hopes you'll see some of the training changes in 2016.

The team said goodbye last year to the major incident investigation truck. It has been replaced by two equipment trailers — one housed in the northern half of the state, the other in southern Minnesota — that are towed to the scene by the investigators with their trucks. These equipment trailers have been a huge help and provide a quicker and more efficient method for the investigators to get extra equipment and tools to a scene if necessary.



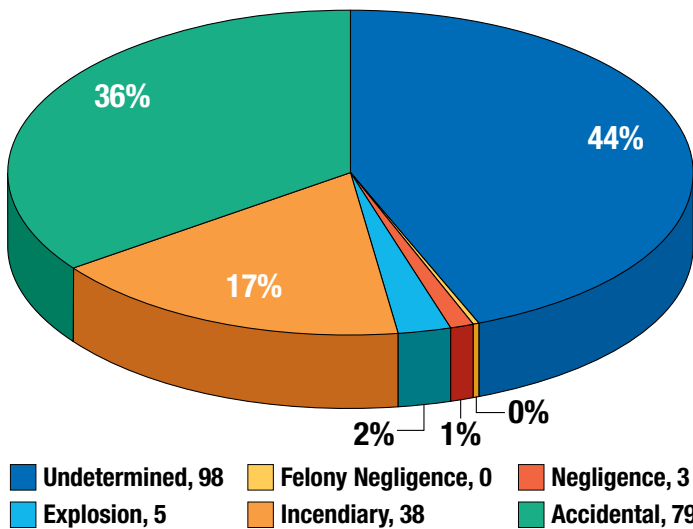
2015 by the numbers **Investigations**

The team assists with hundreds of fire investigations each year across Minnesota. Investigation assistance may be requested by local fire service or law enforcement personnel. Investigators will not be dispatched when requests are received from private citizens or insurance companies.

The team has investigated 2,100 fires since 2011:

- 2015: 465 (plus 76 consultations)
- 2014: 413
- 2013: 396
- 2012: 428
- 2011: 398

Fire causes – 2015



Training

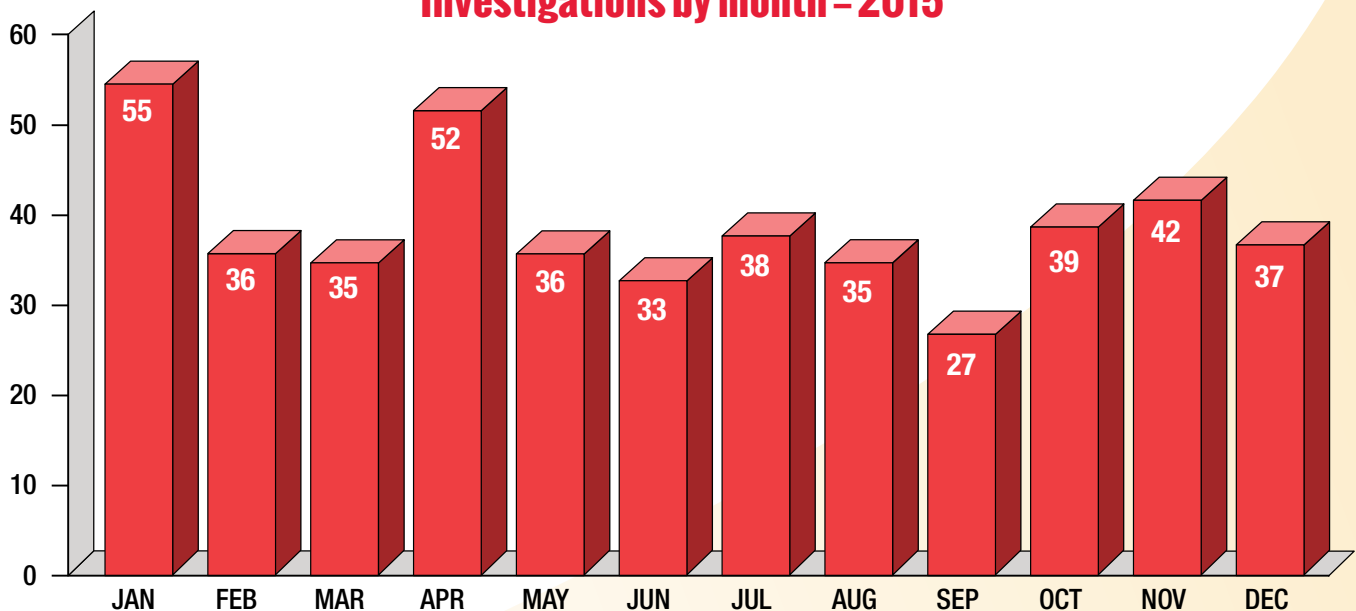
Basic and advanced training courses continue to draw interest from Minnesota firefighters and law enforcement officers. Training is mandated by state statute and conducted by Investigator Casey Stotts.

- Training classes in 2015: 19
- Number of attendees: 524
- Class topics:
 - Organizing the fire scene
 - Basic fire investigation
 - State fire school
 - Basic fire and arson investigation
 - Basic fire safety
 - A line firefighter's role in fire investigations
 - Advanced fire investigation
 - Fire death investigation
 - Interview and interrogations in fire investigations

Did you know?

You can reach an SFMD fire investigator 24/7 by calling the Minnesota Duty Officer at 1-800-422-0798.

Investigations by month – 2015





FIRE PROTECTION TEAM

About

The Fire Protection Team performs the following functions:

- Licenses fire protection contractors.
- Certifies installing personnel.
- Issues permits for fire protection systems.
- Reviews plans for these systems.
- Inspects fire protection systems.
- Provides training on fire protection systems.
- Provides technical assistance.

Meet the team

Jon Nisja | Supervisor

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7204 or jon.nisja@state.mn.us

Annette Lindquist | Protection Team Support

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7207 or annette.lindquist@state.mn.us

Dan Kaiser | Sprinkler Plan Reviewer

Duties: Performs plan reviews, conducts inspections and provides fire protection information to clients

Contact: 651-201-201-7215 or dan.kaiser@state.mn.us

Ryan Kunst | Sprinkler Plan Reviewer

Duties: Performs plan reviews, conducts inspections and provides fire protection information to clients

Contact: 651-201-7217 or

ryan.kunst@state.mn.us

Ralph Peterson | Sprinkler Plan Reviewer/Inspector

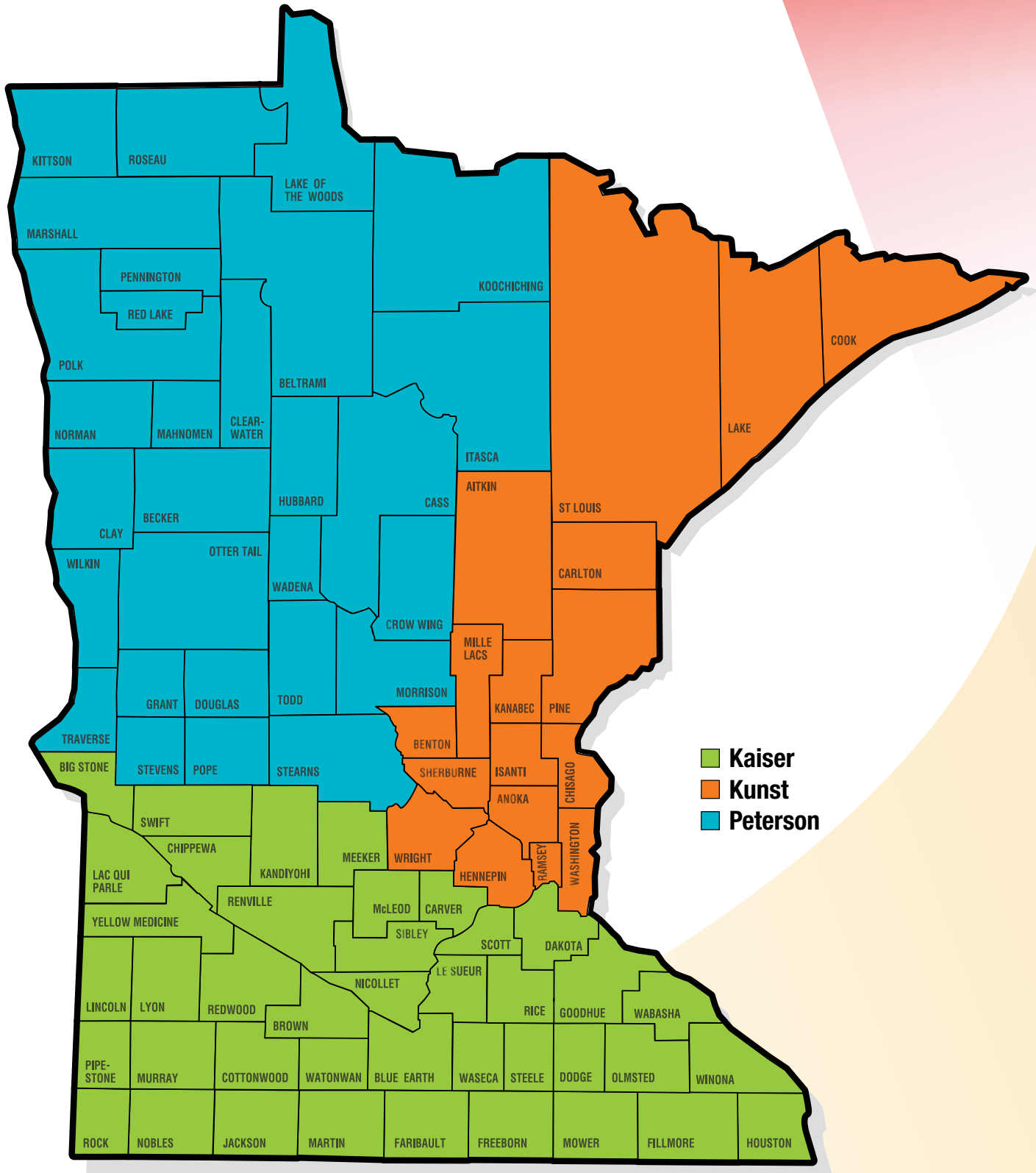
Duties: Performs plan reviews, conducts inspections and provides fire protection information to clients

Contact: 651-201-7216 or ralph.peterson@state.mn.us

What they do

The team's mission is to save lives and property through effective licensing, plan review and inspecting fire protection systems. Their efforts ensure that fire protection systems work effectively, reducing the harm caused to people and property by fire.

FIRE PROTECTION TEAM BY COUNTY



- Kaiser
- Kunst
- Peterson

FIRE PROTECTION TEAM

The use of fire protection systems is on the rise. The SFMD Fire Protection Team is able to track sprinkler effectiveness and show that these systems are working.

Best of 2015

In the early months of 2015, the Fire Protection Team provided training to 515 of the state's 605 sprinkler fitters (85 percent of the sprinkler installers).

2015 by the numbers

Contractor licensing

In 2015 there were 68 licensed fire-protection contractors in Minnesota. A breakdown of the licenses is as follows:

- Total licensed contractors: 68 (down from 70 in 2014)
 - Limited contractors: 4
 - Design contractors: 5
 - Fire protection contractors: 59

Breakdown of fire protection contractors

- Out-of-state based: 21
- Minnesota-based: 38
 - Metro area: 23
 - Greater Minnesota: 15

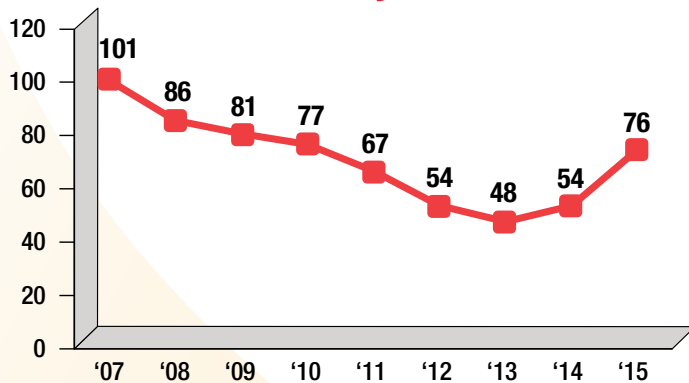
Installer certification

In 2015 there were 691 certificates issued to journeyman sprinkler fitters and managing employees; the following is a breakdown of certificates issued:

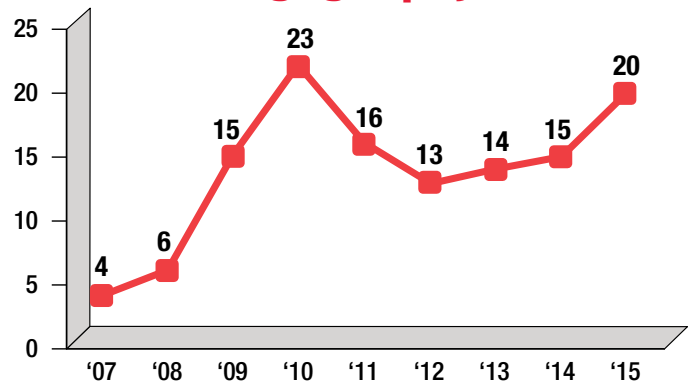
- Number of journeyman sprinkler fitters: 605 (down from 618 in 2014)
- Number of limited journeyman sprinkler fitters: 15 (down from 17 in 2014)
- Number of managing employees: 71 (down from 74 in 2014)

Exams for journeyman sprinkler fitters and managing employees are given every two months. The following shows the exam activity for the past eight years:

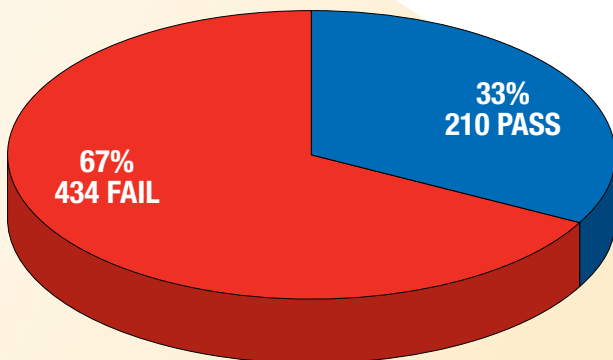
Journeyman



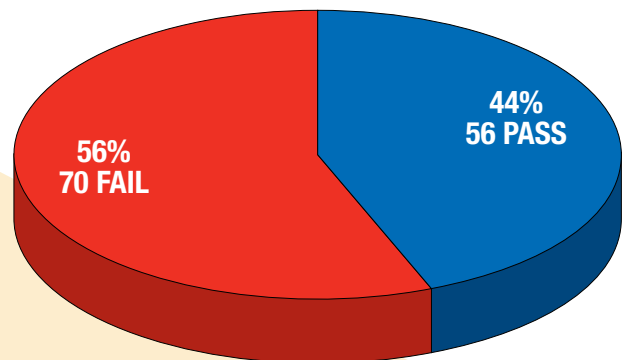
Managing employee



Sprinkler fitter exam results 2007-2015



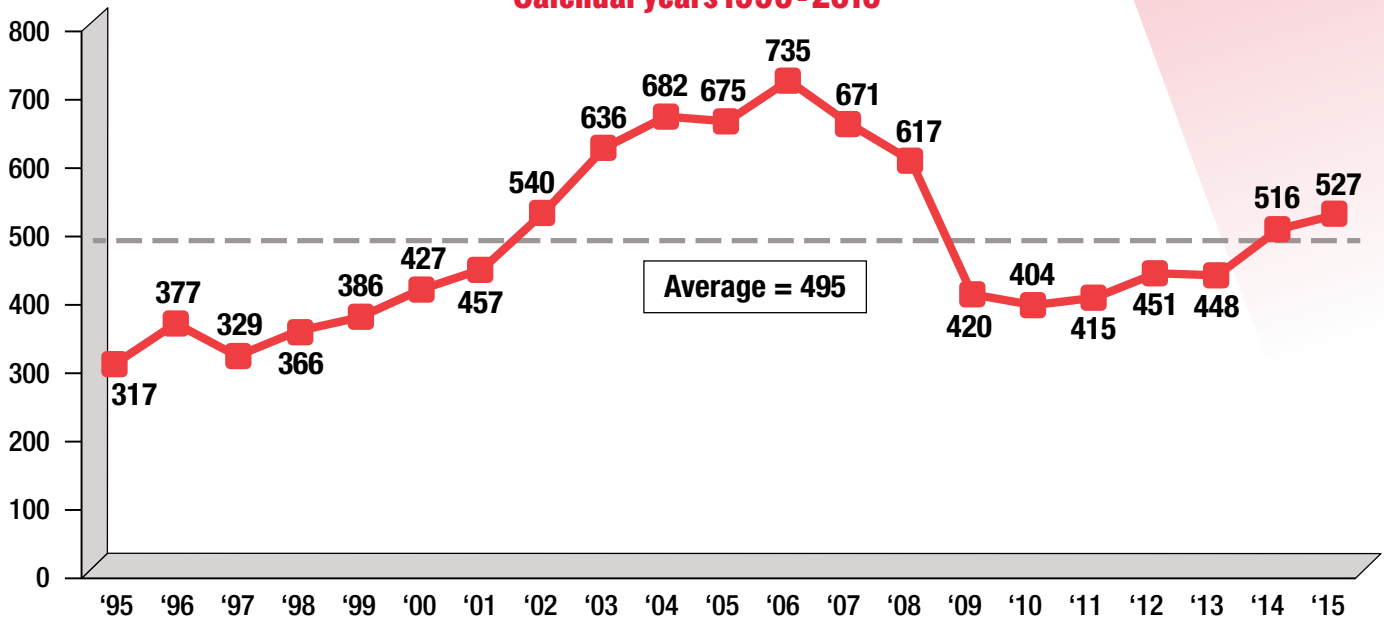
Managing employee exam results 2007-2015



Permit issuing

There are about 190 communities and townships that issue fire protection installation permits. In all other areas of Minnesota, the SFMD is the issuing authority for fire protection permits. The following table shows permit activity since the program's inception in 1995.

**Plans assigned a permit number
Calendar years 1995 - 2015**



Plan reviews and inspections

The team has three full-time employees who perform hundreds of fire protection plan reviews and inspections each year. There was a significant increase in total plan reviews in 2015, while the number of inspections remained about the same. A breakdown of the plan review and inspection activity for the past five years is shown below:

Plans and inspection activity				
Year	Initial Reviews	Re-Submittal Reviews	Total Reviews	Inspections
2011	381	82	463	481
2012	473	52	525	441
2013	400	59	459	274
2014	424	80	504	312
2015	524	53	577	308

Fire protection systems training

Training on proper fire protection system installation and operation is an important function of the Fire Protection Team. In 2012, the SFMD had a trailer constructed to demonstrate fire protection systems. The trailer has seven sprinkler and standpipe systems, plus a functional fire alarm and detection system. The fire protection system demonstration trailer is transported around Minnesota and used to train fire service personnel, code officials and facility representatives.

Last year was a bit quieter for the Fire Protection System Demonstration Trailer than previous years. Here is the data on the Fire Protection System Demonstration Trailer activity:

- Number of demonstrations in 2014: 17
- Number of participants: 200

Did you know?

Minnesota averages over 70 sprinkler saves each year? That works out to one sprinkler save every five days.



HEALTH CARE TEAM

About

The Health Care Team is responsible for the inspection of all health care facilities licensed by the Minnesota Department of Health and also those federally certified by the Federal Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services for federal reimbursement. Inspections are also conducted as required by the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC).

Health care facilities in these categories include:

- Hospitals
- Nursing homes
- Boarding care homes
- Supervised licensed facilities
- Outpatient surgical centers
- Hospice facilities
- Prisons/jails

In addition to the above facilities, the team inspects adult foster care facilities upon their initial license application to the State DHS.

The team is made up of 11 personnel: A fire safety supervisor, two support staff and eight inspectors.

Meet the team

Tom Linhoff | Supervisor

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7205 or tom.linhoff@state.mn.us

Angela Kappenman | Health Care Team Support

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7208 or angela.kappenman@state.mn.us

Marian Whitney | Health Care Team Support

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7213 or marian.whitney@state.mn.us

William Abderhalden | Inspector

Location: Otsego

Coverage: West Metro

Contact: 507-361-6204 or william.abderhalden@state.mn.us

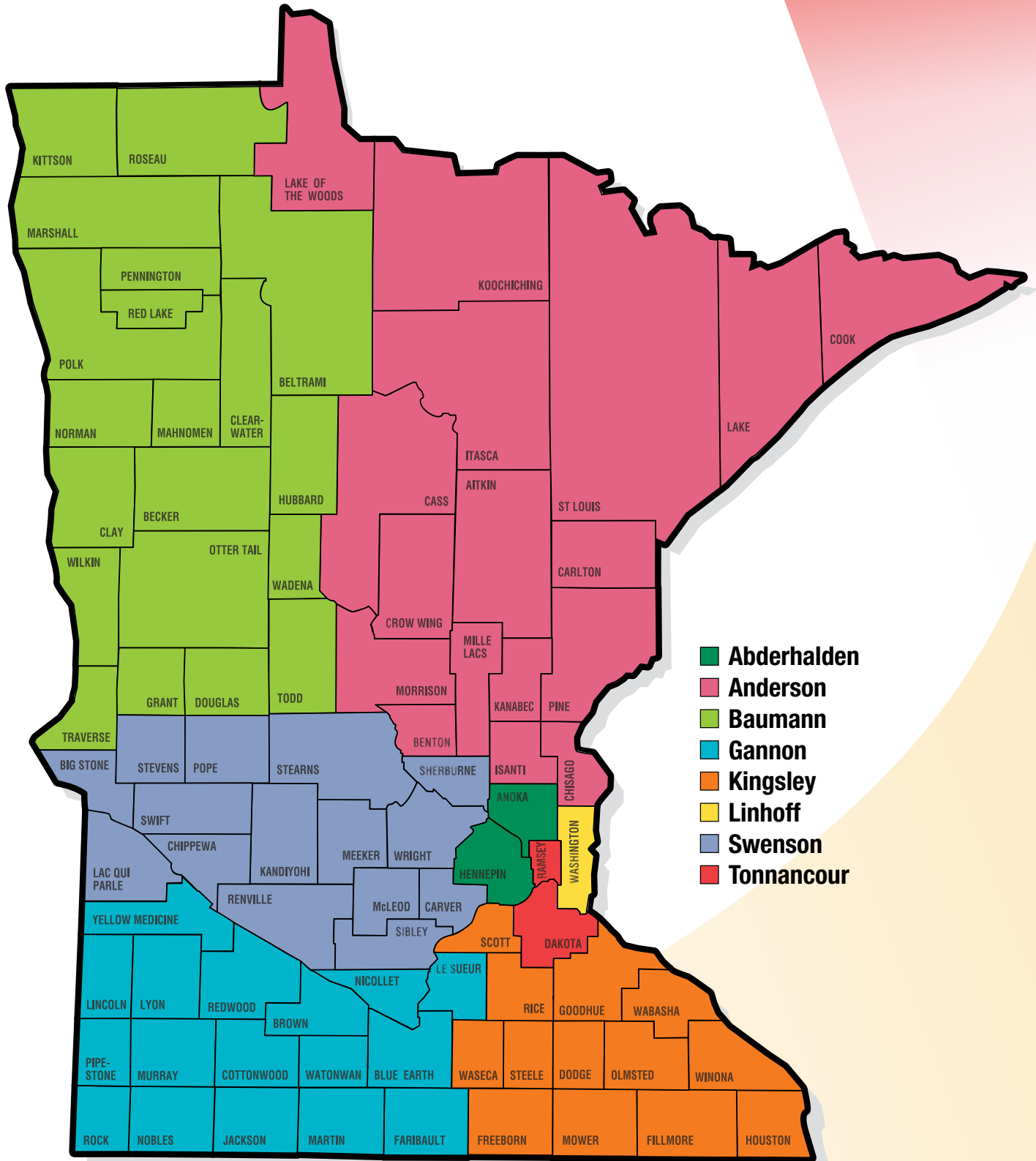
James Anderson | Inspector

Location: Little Falls

Coverage area: Northeastern Minnesota

Contact: james.a.anderson@state.mn.us or 651-249-6880

HEALTH CARE TEAM BY COUNTY



HEALTH CARE TEAM

Robert Baumann I Inspector

Location: Alexandria

Coverage: Northwestern Minnesota

Contact: 612-430-1276 or Robert.baumann@state.mn.us

Larry Gannon I Inspector

Location: Janesville

Coverage area: Southwestern Minnesota

Contact: larry.gannon@state.mn.us or 651-769-7779

Roy Kingsley I Inspector

Location: Mendota Heights

Coverage: Southeastern Minnesota

Contact: 651-769-7772 or roy.kingsley@state.mn.us

Kerry Queen I Inspector

Location: St. Cloud

Coverage: Statewide

Contact: 651-769-7780 or kerry.queen@state.mn.us

Kim Swenson I Inspector

Location: St. Francis

Coverage area: West Central Minnesota

Contact: 651-769-7773 or kimberly.swenson@state.mn.us

Brian Tonnancour I Inspector

Location: New Richmond Wisconsin

Coverage: East Metro

Contact: 651-470-4416 or brian.tonnancour@state.mn.us

What they do

Annual fire inspections help assure that every resident and/or patient of a Minnesota health care facility has a living environment reasonably safe from the dangers of fire and related emergencies.

SFMD fire inspectors are certified through the Minnesota Fire Service Certification Board as fire inspectors I or II and have extensive fire inspection experience. Because this team is responsible for enforcing the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) fire safety program, each inspector is required to attend a week-long CMS training class on the Life Safety Code, which is the basis of the CMS fire safety program. They must

also attend a 24-hour class from CMS including Health Care Facilities (NFPA Standard 99) and Fire Safety Evaluation System (NFPA Standard 101A) for both health care facilities and board-and-care facilities.

Best of 2015

There were several changes in the Health Care Team in 2015. With retirements and transfers, four openings were filled. Tom Linhoff took over as supervisor with the retirement of Pat Sheehan after 40 years of service to the SFMD. Filling positions throughout the state are:

- Roy Kingsley — Southeastern Minnesota. Roy came to the State from Apple Valley Fire Department.
- Brian Tonnancour — East metro
- Bill Abderhalden — West metro

Both Brian and Bill come to us from many years of fire service background and are recent military veterans.

2015 by the numbers

Inspections

The Health Care Team conducted 1,028 inspections in hospitals, nursing homes, boarding caring homes, supervised living facilities, outpatient surgical centers, hospice facilities and prisons/jails.

Hospitals and nursing homes present some of the most complicated fire inspections. Often in large complex arrangements, they feature many types of occupancies, including institutional, assembly, storage, maintenance, helicopter landing pads, clinics, and doctors' offices.

Here is a breakdown of our 2015 inspections:

- Special hospital validation inspections: 11
- Hospital inspections: 84
- Nursing home inspections: 429
- Supervised living inspections: 231
- Surgery center/clinic inspections: 39
- Prison/jail inspections: 86
- Foster care inspections: 148

The top five most frequently cited fire safety deficiencies by our health care inspectors are:

1. Failure to conduct required fire drills.
2. Failure to separate hazardous areas.
3. Failure to maintain fire sprinkler systems.
4. Failure to test/inspect emergency generator.
5. Failure to maintain electrical wiring/equipment.

Training

The Health Care Team provided information last year at the annual conferences of the three primary healthcare organizations that represent the hospitals and nursing homes in the state: Care Providers of Minnesota (CPMn), Leading Age Minnesota (LAM) and the Minnesota Health Care Engineering Association (MHCEA).

CPMn and LAM provide numerous resources to their membership. The MHCEA focuses on the facility engineers. It is the MHCEA membership that the Health Care Team members have the most direct contact with during their fire inspections, and to whom they provide the most up-to-date information with respect to regulations with which facilities and staff must be in compliance in order to maintain state licenses and federal certification.

At the MHCEA conference, the Health Care Team spends the first day in the vendors' area, staffing a booth for direct contact with conference attendees, answering questions and providing fire safety information. On the second day they provide a day-long seminar on current fire safety issues and regulatory changes. The primary focus is on fire prevention and helping the facilities maintain a fire-safe environment for residents, patients, staff and visitors.

In addition, the MHCEA has five chapters: Arrowhead, Midwestern, Northern, Southern and Twin Cities. Health Care Team members attend those chapter meetings to meet and greet area engineers and provide the most up-to-date training.

Did you know?

Three of our newest inspectors completed training in Texas. The Center for Medicaid/Medicare Services provides training to our staff to become certified as federal inspectors. These inspectors are now able to conduct life safety inspections throughout Minnesota in federally funded facilities.



RESIDENTIAL CARE AND LODGING TEAM

About

The Residential Care and Lodging Team (RCLT) was created following several tragic losses of life in Minnesota lodging buildings. Comprehensive fire safety inspections now help make Minnesota a safer travel, vacation and conference destination.

The RCLT:

- Conducts fire safety inspections in hotels throughout Minnesota. Each hotel is inspected at least once every three years with follow-up fire safety inspections as needed.
- Conducts initial fire safety inspections of all DHS-licensed facilities, including day care centers, family child care, adult day care, day training and habilitation, child foster care and chemical dependency.
- Conducts fire safety inspections on request from or because of a complaint to the local fire department or municipality.
- Provides training on fire code requirements to child care and foster care licensors, providers and local fire marshals.

National and state statistics show people are most vulnerable to fire when they are sleeping. Most fires happen in the home/apartment; in Minnesota, 79 percent of fires and 74 percent of fire fatalities for 2014 were in residential properties. Having working smoke detectors and suppression systems are critical to waking people who are sleeping for providing adequate time for escape.

Meet the team

Glen Bergstrand | Supervisor

Location: Duluth

Contact: 218-721-4447 or glen.bergstrand@state.mn.us

DaNay Freeman | Residential Team Support

Location: St. Paul

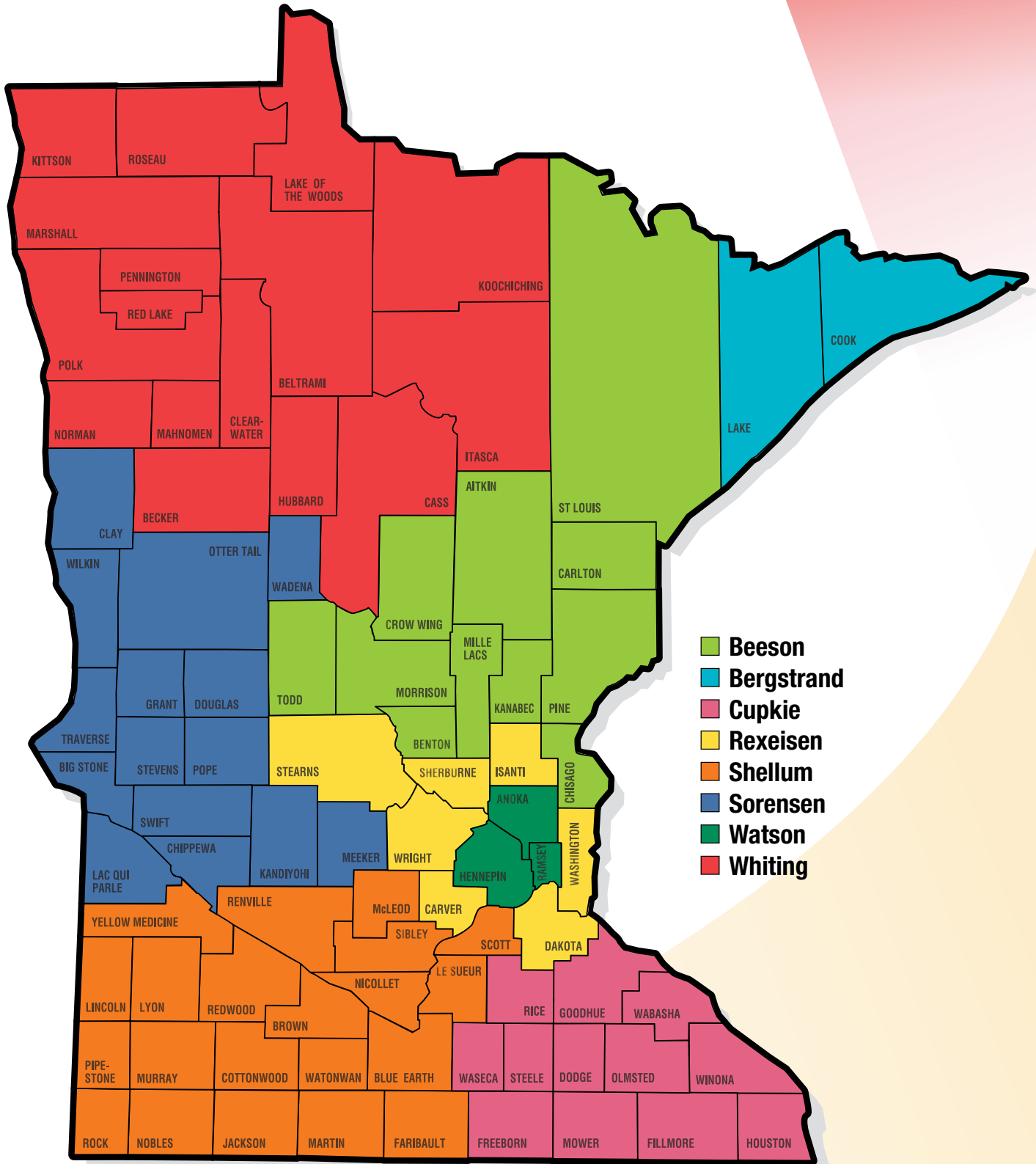
Contact: 651-201-7211 or denay.freeman@state.mn.us

Randi Samuelson | Residential Team Support

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7212 or randi.j.samuelson@state.mn.us

RESIDENTIAL CARE AND LODGING TEAM BY COUNTY



RESIDENTIAL CARE AND LODGING TEAM

Dan Beeson I Inspector

Location: Brainerd

Coverage area: Northeast Minnesota

Contact: 612-270-9402 or dan.beeson@state.mn.us

Floyd Cupkie I Inspector

Location: Medford

Coverage area: Southeast Minnesota

Contact: 507-444-2426 or floyd.cupkie@state.mn.us

Bob Rexeisen I Inspector

Location: Circle Pines

Coverage area: Metro Area

Contact: 612-386-4657 or robert.rexeisen@state.mn.us

George Shellum I Inspector

Location: Silver Lake

Coverage area: Southwest Minnesota

Contact: 320-327-8465 or george.shellum@state.mn.us

Richard Sorensen I Inspector

Location: Fergus Falls

Coverage area: West Central Minnesota

Contact: 651-769-7785 or richard.sorensen@state.mn.us

Chris Watson I Inspector

Location: Coon Rapids

Coverage area: Metro Area

Contact: 763-754-0343 or chris.watson@state.mn.us

Ryan Whiting I Inspector

Location: Bemidji

Coverage area: Northwest Minnesota

Contact: 218-444-4757 or ryan.whiting@state.mn.us

What they do

The mission of the RCLT is to prevent fire deaths and property loss in hotels and residential care homes. People are most vulnerable when they are sleeping in unfamiliar buildings with no one awake to notice a developing fire. As the number of people and the size of a building increase, the potential for loss of life increases, too.

The RCLT mitigates this hazard through fire safety inspections of all hotels in Minnesota every three years, as required by law, with follow-up inspections as needed to gain compliance with the Minnesota State Fire Code. Training and consultation on fire safety requirements and fire prevention is provided to municipalities who conduct fire safety inspections of hotels and residential care homes, and to building owners, licensors and managers.

Residential care homes (day care, foster care, rehab) are inspected for fire safety when first licensed by the DHS.

Fire code safety requirements depend on the use of the building, age of construction, size of the building and other occupancies within the building (such as places of assembly, retail, garages and hazardous areas). Fire safety may include fire sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, fire-protected exit corridors and stairways, employee safety training, exit route identification, emergency lighting, fire resistive construction and other requirements, depending on the size and use of the building.

The best of 2015

Cooperation, collaboration, compassion.

Those three words describe an ongoing trend, started in previous SFMD administrations and expounded upon by current administrations, that favorably affects not only the Residential Care and Lodging Team but all SFMD teams and the fire service.

Cooperation and collaboration from other state agencies, the state legislature, and the fire service have been phenomenal in finding solutions to complex fire safety issues that are always changing through development of new technologies in building products, construction methods, fire detection/alerting and suppression systems.

This cooperation and collaboration results in a high level of commitment from all members of all teams to do the best they can to provide reasonable fire safety for everyone in Minnesota. The passion for the job of being on a SFMD team and doing the best has never been higher. Thanks to all those from other state agencies, the state legislature, and the fire service who have helped fuel this high level of commitment.

The RCLT had a busy 2015. Team members were a part of the SFMD Honor Guard for firefighter funerals. They also continued building official and fire marshal certifications, provided instruction on fire safety requirements at numerous training conferences, constructed a demonstration commercial kitchen hood suppression system for the fire safety trailer and conducted tribal relations training and Somali public safety relations training.

Some team members completed an intensive leadership training course and incident command courses.

2015 by the numbers

Inspections

The RCLT is spread out across the state and assists with hundreds of inspections each year. The following is a breakdown of inspections in 2015.

Hotels:

- Fire safety inspections: 328
- Follow-up inspections: 312
- Fire safety violations cited: 1,278

DHS-licensed facilities:

- Fire safety inspections: 1,013
- Follow-up inspections: 91

Most common fire safety violations

One of the most common violations found during fire safety inspections is non-working smoke alarms and missing smoke alarms. Although this violation is not as common as it used to be, it was still cited 310 times in DHS-licensed homes in 2015. This is a serious issue.

According to studies, most people will not wake in time to escape a fire without a smoke alarm alerting them. Smoke alarms are found not functional in hotel guest rooms and family child care homes most frequently because batteries have been removed or the power disconnected because of false alarm issues.

What causes false alarms? Many of the issues we commonly refer to as “false alarms” are not actually false alarms but activation of a smoke detector due to cigarette smoke, burned toast or excess humidity from a shower. Proper placement of smoke alarms can alleviate many of these so-called false alarms. Newer smoke alarms cause

far fewer “false alarms.” The fire code now requires smoke alarms in residences to be replaced at least every 10 years.

A common set of fire safety violations involves “egress,” cited over 420 times in 2015. Egress violations include lack of handrails, unapproved door locks on exit doors, exit and escape window obstructions, and in hotels, exit-path emergency illumination.

- Handrails allow people to exit more quickly on stairs. According to insurance statistics, falls on stairs is one of the highest injury claims.
- Locked or obstructed exit doors is an ongoing issue. Security is very important, but it is equally important to have locks that can easily be unlocked from the inside of the structure so residents can quickly escape. There are numerous approved lock styles, from thumb-turn types used in residences to emergency panic-style exit hardware used in commercial buildings that comply with fire code requirements while providing excellent security. Obstructed exits occur when items are placed in exit pathways in normal everyday use of the building. Although many of the items placed in the exit way could be easily removed, moving obstructions while fleeing a fire doesn't happen, it only slows the escape or trips people while they're trying to escape.
- Emergency illumination of exit ways in hotels and other commercial buildings is usually provided by battery-pack emergency lights installed in hallways and stairways. These require periodic maintenance to ensure the battery is in good condition.

Another common fire safety violation is use of extension cords for permanent wiring. A common fire cause is electrical cords overheated from improper use, either appliances with amperage too high for the size of the wiring or damaged cords causing arcing and sparking. It is often surprising to see the amount of damage to electrical cords people will ignore, continuing to use them for high-amperage appliances.

Did you know?

In the 1970s folks had up to 17 minutes to escape a home fire before the home was not survivable; now, due to combustible furnishings, lightweight construction and additional fuel loading, the average time available to escape a fire is three to four minutes from when the fire started.



SCHOOL INSPECTION TEAM

About

The public school inspection program was established by the Minnesota Legislature in 1990 following several destructive school fires in the late 1980s. The legislation requires the State Fire Marshal Division to inspect each of Minnesota's roughly 1,700 public and charter school buildings once every three years, including primary, middle, secondary and alternative schools.

The School Inspection Team consists of four inspectors and one supervisor. Each member is assigned to a geographical inspection region. All school inspectors hold, at a minimum, a Fire Inspector II certification from the Minnesota Fire Service Certification Board and participate in continuing education each year.

Meet the team

Forrest Williams I Supervisor

Location: Duluth

Coverage area: Northeastern Minnesota

Contact: 651-769-7784 or forrest.williams@state.mn.us

Randi Samuelson I School Team Support

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7212 or randi.j.samuelson@state.mn.us

Joe Faust I Inspector

Location: Lonsdale

Coverage area: Southern Minnesota

Contact: 507-602-0651 or joseph.faust@state.mn.us

Kurt Kastella I Inspector

Location: Underwood

Coverage area: Northwestern Minnesota

Contact: 651-769-7775 or kurt.kastella@state.mn.us

Brad Lundquist I Inspector

Location: Little Falls

Coverage area: Northern Metro and Surrounding Counties

Contact: 612-269-5663 or bradley.lundquist@state.mn.us

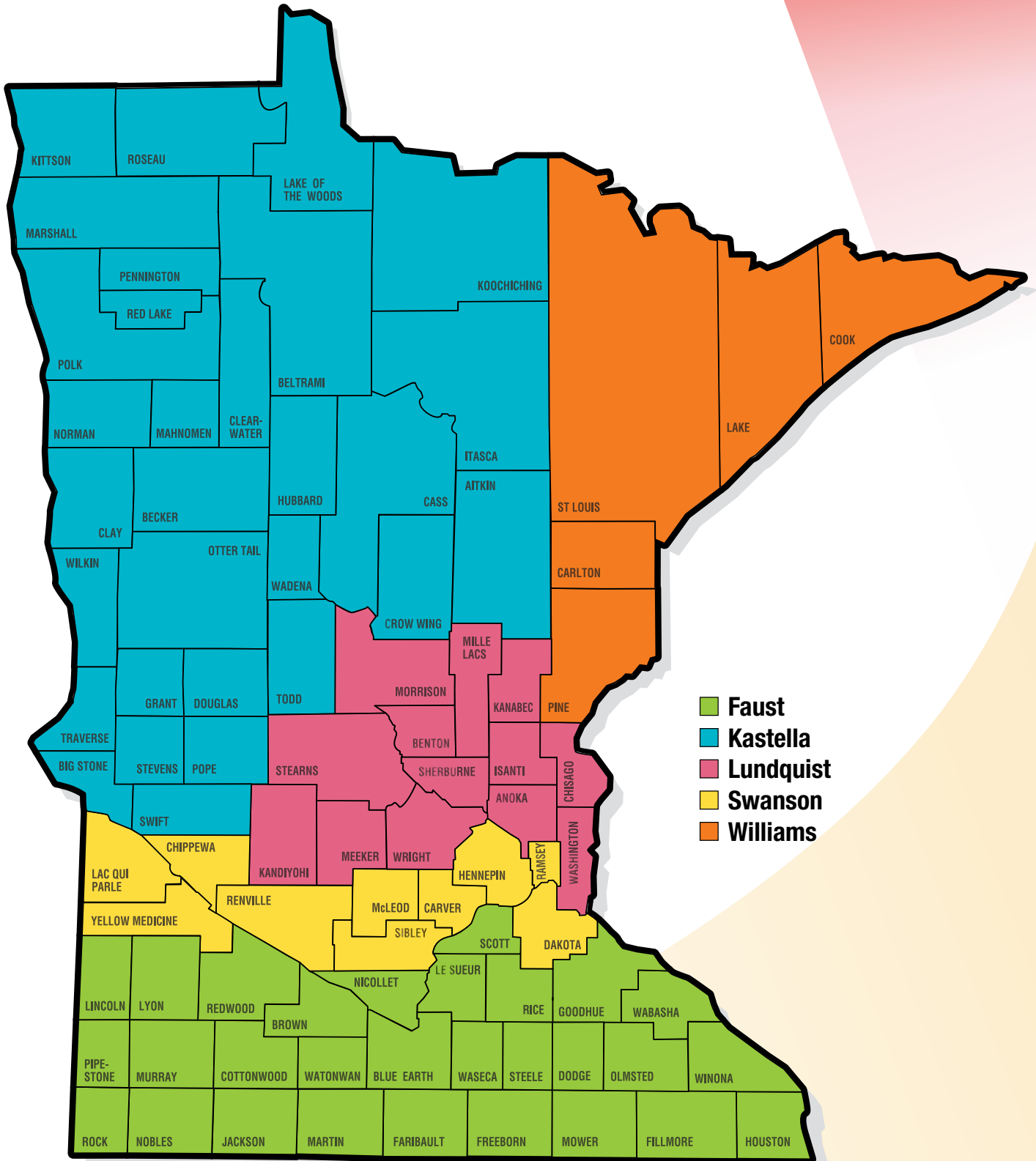
John Swanson I Inspector and Plans Examiner

Location: Lakeville

Coverage area: South Central Minnesota

Contact 651-334-3217 or john.swanson@state.mn.us

SCHOOL INSPECTION TEAM BY COUNTY



SCHOOL INSPECTION TEAM

What they do

The primary goal of the program is to identify and correct fire and life safety violations that have historically contributed to disastrous events in schools. To this end, school inspectors focus their attention on the following:

- Adequate means of egress.
- Required fire alarm and fire suppression systems.
- Required fire resistance rated construction features.
- Identification and abatement of fire hazards.
- Educating school administration and staff on fire prevention practices and code compliance.
- Emergency evacuation plans and procedures.

Because many Minnesota schools buildings were constructed prior to the adoption of statewide building and fire codes, SFMD officials developed policies to allow installation of automatic sprinkler and fire alarm systems to compensate for the fire safety deficiencies found in these older buildings. Dozens of school fires have been detected early, controlled or extinguished by fire protection systems installed under these policies.

When school inspectors identify fire code deficiencies, the schools must provide a plan to correct them. Inspectors review these plans to assure that alarm installations and other construction projects meet minimum code requirements.

Evaluating program effectiveness

According to Minnesota Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS) data, Minnesota has 30 percent fewer fires in educational occupancies when compared to the national rate.

Even more impressive is the fire loss comparison, where the average financial loss per school fire in Minnesota has typically been 80 percent below national average when compared to the most recent national data — the only outlier being the total loss of a Minnesota elementary school in 2014 due to a late-night lightning strike. However, prior to that event, there hadn't been a major fire loss in a Minnesota school building for nearly 20 years.

It should also be noted that before the inception of the school inspection program in 1990, fire losses in Minnesota schools closely mirrored the national averages — signifying a 75 percent reduction in fire loss since the inspection program began.

The best of 2015

A primary focus of SFMD school inspectors in 2015 was to review each school's fire emergency plans and procedures for proper content and effectiveness, including procedures for helping occupants who may require special assistance during emergencies. Additionally, inspectors provided contact information and resources from the Minnesota School Safety Center to districts needing assistance in developing comprehensive, multi-hazard crisis plans.

2015 by the numbers

Inspections

In 2015 the School Inspection Team conducted 605 inspections and 349 follow-up inspections, resulting in the discovery of 3,764 violations. The 10 most common violations cited by school inspectors are:

1. Means of egress
2. Electrical issues
3. Fire protection systems
4. Storage arrangements
5. Fire resistance rated construction
6. Interior wall or ceiling finish
7. Fire safety and emergency planning
8. Portable fire extinguishers
9. Maintenance of emergency power systems
10. Combustible waste materials

Training

The School Inspection Team provides fire code and inspection training for code officials and local school inspectors, including those units of government authorized to inspect public schools within their jurisdiction. Other training is available for school maintenance staff and administrators, school safety consultants, fire protection system contractors, design professionals and general stakeholders.

Our school inspectors provide quick answers and onsite consultations on code requirements, fire safety practices and emergency planning.

- Training sessions in 2015: 18
- Number of attendees: 766 (over 61 hours of class time)
- Class topics:
 - Door locking and control systems
 - Fire extinguisher use
 - Common fire code violations
 - State Fire Code
 - Fire alarm systems

Did you know?

There hasn't been a reported civilian fire injury in a Minnesota school since 2011. Nearly 60 percent of Minnesota public schools are protected with automatic fire sprinkler systems.



SPECIAL TEAMS AND PROJECTS

THE SFMD HONOR GUARD

About

The Honor Guard was created after a retired staff member died in 2013 and his family requested the SFMD staff participate in the visitation and funeral service.

Meet the Team

Joe Faust | Commander

Contact: joseph.faust@state.mn.us or 507-602-0651

Dan Beeson

Contact: dan.beeson@state.mn.us or 612-270-9402

James Iammatteo

Contact: james.iammatteo@state.mn.us or 612-597-3981

Thomas Linhoff

Contact: tom.linhoff@state.mn.us or 651-769-7778

Brad Lundquist

bradley.lundquist@state.mn.us or 612-269-5663

Kathi Osmonson

kathi.osmonson@state.mn.us or 763-280-4609

Kerry Queen

Contact: kerry.queen@state.mn.us or 651-769-7780

Bob Rexeisen

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Casey Stotts

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Amanda Swenson

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Ralph Peterson

Contact: ralph.peterson@state.mn.us or 612-928-4505

Kevin Sedivy

Contact: kevin.sedivy@state.mn.us or 651-201-7218

Rich Sellman

Contact: rich.sellman@state.mn.us or 218-966-4436

What they do

The 13-member group provides honor guard and color presentation detail for special occasions including:

- Retirements
- Funerals
- Conferences

How to request the Honor Guard

All requests for the Honor Guard will be forwarded to the State Fire Marshal for consideration. Once a request has been approved, team leaders will contact members for availability to respond and provide all information on the event, its location and times. Go to our website at sfm.dps.mn.gov under the “services” tab to find the Honor Guard webpage to make a request.

2015 events

The SFMD Honor Guard participated in eight events in 2015, including three funerals.

Best of 2015

The Honor Guard and Minnesota State Patrol joined together to present colors for the “911 Traveling Memorial” presentation at the Waseca County Fair.

Did you know?

The Honor Guard’s team motto is “Family, Honor, Respect, Compassion.”

SPECIAL PROJECTS

About

The special projects coordinator is responsible for the Recruitment and Retention Stipend Pilot Program, the Turnout Gear Washer/Extractor Grant Program and other special projects as assigned by the state fire marshal.

Meet the special projects coordinator

Nanci Libor, Program Administrator

Location: Elk River

Contact: nanci.libor@state.mn.us or 612-270-6956

What she does

The special projects coordinator assists the SFMD with the following:

- Recruitment and retention
- The Gear Washer Program
- Other special projects

Best of 2015

Through the Turnout Gear Washer/Extractor Award program we were able to grant awards of up to \$10,000 to 27 fire

departments to assist with the purchase and installation of a gear washer/extractor. This equipment helps clean firefighter gear. Studies have shown that firefighters are acutely exposed to known carcinogens during structure and other fires and are continually exposed via turnout gear that is soiled due to exposure to toxic combustion byproducts.

2015 by the numbers

The Recruitment & Retention Stipend Pilot Program entered its second year. This program helps volunteer/paid on call fire departments and EMS organizations with recruitment and retention efforts by paying qualified volunteers a \$500 annual stipend. In 2015, we received applications from all 125 qualified fire departments and 67 EMS organizations. This program is in place through 2016.

Did you know?

In Minnesota there are 20,600 firefighters; 2,760 are eligible for the current Recruitment & Retention Stipend Pilot Program.

SPECIAL TEAMS AND PROJECTS

FIRE SERVICE SPECIALIST

About

The Fire Service Specialist is a liaison between the SFMD and Minnesota fire departments. The Fire Service Specialist also provides assistance as requested by fire department officials across Minnesota.

Meet the specialist

Bruce Roed | Fire Service Specialist

Location: Mentor

Contact: bruce.roed@state.mn.us or 651-201-7218

What he does

The Fire Service Specialist assists fire departments upon request with the following:

- Answering the 1-800-FIRE-LINE (national fire department information number)
- National Fire Academy (NFA) state training point of contact
- Publications from SFMD available on website
- Fire department management assistance
- Disciplinary issues
- Grant assistance
- Contracts/disputes/arbitration
- Minimum credentials/requirements
- Mutual-aid agreements/joint-powers agreements
- Consolidations
- Fireworks and explosives annual permitting
- Manage an annual National Fire Academy State Training Grant
- Manage a \$250,000 Assistance to Firefighter Grant for mobile ventilation trailer equipment

The fire service specialist also administers the Shared Services Grant Program.

Best of 2015

We had record-setting attendance at both the Minnesota Fire Chief's Conference and the Fire Officer School in January 2016. We have traditionally had declining numbers at schools throughout the state for the last several years, but there evidently is a continued and maybe an increased need for officer level training.

2015 by the numbers

There were many more Minnesota fire departments this year than in the past that could not say yes to all of the questions on the FA-1 form to determine their qualification for State Fire Aid, especially the question asking if they had 10 or more active members of the fire department. We have formed a committee to re-evaluate this form for the future.

More and more fire departments are expressing concerns for the future of volunteer or paid on-call firefighters. This is a problem not just in Minnesota but across the country. Do we need to re-evaluate how we recruit and retain volunteer or paid on-call firefighters? Do we need to consider adjusting our expectations of them to more closely align with the conflicting needs of young families?

Did you know?

The SFMD has purchased three mobile ventilation trailers with Assistance to Firefighter Grant funds. These trailers will be distributed across the state to make a more realistic hands-on experience in basic fire department operations such as cutting ventilation holes on a roof or end walls, forcible entry, etc.





SUPPORT TEAM

About

The SFMD home office in St. Paul has a team of nine talented individuals that make sure the division is in great shape to run at optimal levels. Formerly called the clerical staff, these nine professionals are now known as the Support Team, a name which better reflects the range of responsibilities carried out by its members.

Meet the team

Barbara Lundberg | Supervisor

Contact: Barbara.lundberg@state.mn.us or 651-201-7203

Danay Freeman | Residential Care and Lodging Team Support

Contact: danay.freeman@state.mn.us or 651-201-72011

Angela Kappenman | Investigations, Health Care, Adult Foster Care and Explosives Support

Contact: angela.kappenman@state.mn.us or 651-201-7208

Annette Lindquist | Fire Protection and State Fire Marshal Conference Support

Contact: annette.lindquist@state.mn.us or 651-201-7207

Randi Samuelson | Schools and Residential Care and Lodging Team Support

Contact: randi.j.samuelson@state.mn.us or 651-201-7212

Marian Whitney | Health Care Team Support

Contact: marian.whitney@state.mn.us or 651-201-7213

What they do

The complexities of electronic technology have vastly changed the skills required and the level of performance necessary to keep up with the fast pace of the inspectors, investigators, and citizens who depend on the SFMD. No longer the clerical typist of yesteryear, each Support Team member is proficient in the operation of several computer software programs, some of which are job specific, some which occasionally change and require retraining and some of which are completely new. Each

team member has individualized, detailed responsibilities for maintaining the schedules and submitted reports of the field staff. Support Team members relieve the field staff of some of the details that must be met to successfully conduct our classes around the state. Calls from the public are responded to in a timely and professional manner so issues can be resolved. We respect that we hold a position which is critical to the smooth operation of our complicated organization.

The best of 2015

The support staff saw quite a few changes this past year. After 37 years with the State Fire Marshal, office supervisor Patricia Bell retired in June. Barb Lundberg was named the new office support supervisor.

Annette Lindquist was hired in November to fill Barb's former position at the sprinkler desk. Angela Kappenman accepted the role as investigations team lead office support. Joel Paylor has the demanding responsibility of fleet management. Travel arrangements are now handled by Margaret Koele.

Health care remains in the capable hands of Marian Whitney, with assists from Angela. Randi Samuelson takes good care of the school team and co-teams with Danay Freeman supporting the residential care and lodging team. Danay runs a tight ship when it comes to supply inventories at headquarters and always finding just the right item, even when the search is challenging.

Joel and Nora Gierok team up to provide strong data support. Fireworks are under Nora's watchful eye, while Nora and Angela both help out with explosives permits.

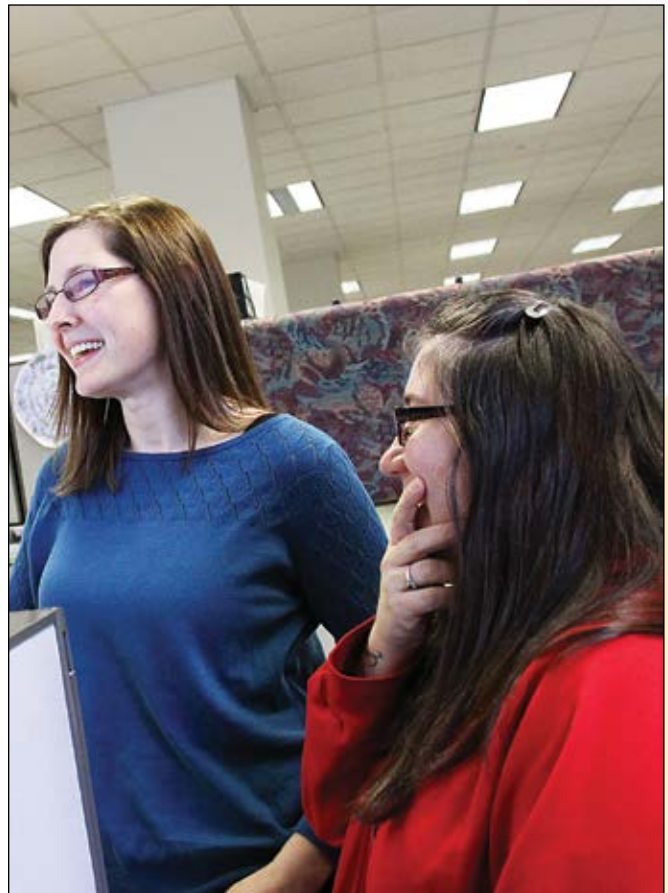
2015 by the numbers

The Support Team reviewed and analyzed 5,750 reports in 2015. The reports contained findings following the investigations of fires and the inspections of nursing

homes, hospitals, out-patient clinics, daycares, schools, adult and child foster care homes, hotels and motels. Sprinkler plans are reviewed and installations are inspected in construction and remodeling projects. Sites are inspected for explosive permits. Each of these actions requires the careful and thorough documentation by the support team.

Did you know?

They are a very active and naturally caring team. Among them, they are parenting or grand-parenting 20 children under the age of 10 and 12 "fur babies."





MINNESOTA BOARD OF FIREFIGHTER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

About

The Minnesota Board of Firefighter Training and Education's (MBFTE) mission is to standardize training by providing funding to pay for it and by licensing Minnesota firefighters. The MBFTE's vision is to reduce fire-related deaths and injuries through excellence in fire service training and education.

Meet the team

Steve Flaherty | Executive Director

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7258 or steve.flaherty@state.mn.us

Margaret Koele | Licensing Coordinator

Location: St. Paul

Duties: Manages and administers the MBFTE's legislative mandate to license firefighters; oversees laws, rules and regulations for firefighter licensure; works with the Attorney General's Office regarding the licensing process

Contact: 651-201-7259 or margaret.koele@state.mn.us

Kevin Sedivy | Fire Service Training and Licensing Specialist

Location: Medford

Duties: Consults and serves as technical resource to the MBFTE and the Minnesota fire service regarding training reimbursements, licensing, certification and MBFTE-qualified instructors; administers and maintains the compliance review processes with fire departments and training providers

Contact: 651-295-1639 or kevin.sedivy@state.mn.us

What they do

The MBFTE was established by the Minnesota Legislature to:

- Review fire service training needs and make training recommendations to Minnesota fire service organizations
- Establish standards for educational programs for the fire service and develop procedures for continuing oversight of those programs
- Establish qualifications for fire service training instructors
- Establish standards under which reimbursement will be provided to departments for training and education

The MBFTE has several funding and training reimbursement programs for the fire service to make use of, including: Fire Department Training Reimbursement Award; Live Burn; NFPA 1001 with certification; Conferences and Seminars Award; Incident Safety Officer; Mass and Gross Decon; Railway and Pipeline Awareness; and Fire Service Leadership Development.

Visit www.mbfte.org for more information about the MBFTE.

The best of 2015

In FY15, approximately \$2 million was made available for Minnesota fire departments, and once again, awards to all Minnesota fire departments were based on a “per firefighter” rate (\$97). The MBFTE chose to award departments based on the number of firefighters on their current roster. No formal applications were required by the MBFTE for a fire department to receive a training reimbursement award. In August 2015, each of Minnesota’s 781 fire departments received an award letter informing them of the amount of funding available for their use on firefighter training during FY16.

Seventy-nine percent of the 781 fire departments submitted training reimbursement documentation to the MBFTE in FY15 — an increase of 20 percent from FY14.

First-time applicants to the training reimbursement program numbered 37 fire departments, and all but 48 fire departments have now submitted for training reimbursements in at least one of the first eight rounds since this program began. The average reimbursement in FY15 was \$4,336.95, based on 618 fire departments seeking training reimbursement. Overall, more than \$2.9 million in training reimbursements was requested by Minnesota fire departments in FY15.

2015 by the numbers

- Again in FY15, the MBFTE provided reimbursement directly to training providers for NFPA 1001, Firefighter 1, Firefighter 2 and Hazardous Materials Operations training. There was \$1,160,000 available to Minnesota fire departments to pay for this training — enough to fund more than 800 firefighters.
- The MBFTE provided a total of \$50,000 in reimbursement grants to local, regional and statewide fire service organizations for unique training events. These “conference, seminar and symposium” awards made available 13 different training opportunities for 20,000 Minnesota firefighters at a significantly reduced rate.
- There was \$79,500 available for live-burn training throughout Minnesota. The money funded 53 separate live-burn trainings in acquired structures across the state in accordance with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1403 standards. NFPA 1403 live-burn training ensures that all live burns in acquired structures were conducted in a safe manner, meeting a nationally recognized standard.
- The MBFTE provided \$102,000 in FY15 to conduct Mass and Gross Decontamination training to more than 190 fire departments through a Hazardous Materials and Emergency Preparedness Grant. This was the fourth and final year of the project, which allowed for the delivery of more than 700 classes over the four-year period.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF FIREFIGHTER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

- The MBFTE provided \$100,000 to train Minnesota firefighters in a course called “Incident Safety Officer Training.” The intent is for firefighters to understand roles and responsibilities of the safety officer on an emergency incident scene. The training has been provided free of charge to more than 500 fire departments in the last three years and will continue through 2016 to ensure all Minnesota fire departments receive this vital training.
- The MBFTE provided more than \$25,000 to fund two Fire Service Leadership Development courses held at Camp Ripley throughout the fiscal year. Each 32-hour course consists of four modules, bringing a cross-section of fire service leaders from across the state — at no cost to them or their department — to develop skills and address key leadership issues that are specific to the Minnesota fire service.
- In partnership with Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the MBFTE reimbursed more than \$51,000 to 67 different public safety agencies who participated in the Railway and Pipeline Safety Awareness Level training. This training is part of a three-year project to bring training to at no cost to Minnesota’s first responders and others involved in a railway or pipeline emergency.

Did you know?

There are 781 fire departments in Minnesota, of which 17 (2.5 percent) are made up of career firefighters; 74 (11.5 percent) are combination; and the remaining 690 (86 percent) consist of either paid on-call or volunteer firefighters.

RETIREMENTS

There were four retirements from the SFMD in 2015. Congratulations and well wishes to these employees.

Pat Bell | Clerical Team Supervisor

Pat spent 36 years with the SFMD before retiring in June. Starting as a very young clerk typist, Pat worked her way through the ranks. All along the way, more duties crept onto her desk. By the time she retired, Pat was office manager, OAS supervisor, investigations team support, organizational chief of all special events and the division expert on rules, regulations, guidelines and procedures. Pat used her enormous recall skills to quickly answer questions and was a reliable source of division history, personnel, and trivia which she referred to as “useless knowledge.” Known for both fairness and a soft heart, Pat resolved many issues with respect for all concerned.

John Gergen | Residential Care and Lodging Team

John retired after working 15 years with the SFMD, 24 years with St. Cloud Fire Department and 16 years with the LP gas industry. With the State Fire Marshal Division, John worked six years on the Health Care Fire Safety Inspection Team and nine years on the Residential Care and Lodging Fire Safety Team. John is well known for solving complex fire code issues with diplomacy.

Jeff Juntunen | Health Care Team Inspector

Jeff retired after working 27 years as a health care inspector with the SFMD. He knew his territory well in the northeast arrowhead and loved to teach engineers at health care schools and conferences. Jeff founded the health care stakeholders group that is still going on today. He loved to fish and would (sometimes) tell you where the fish were biting.

Pat Sheehan | Health Care Team Supervisor

Pat retired after 40 years with the SFMD. Pat began as an inspector and became a supervisor in 1986. He took the SFMD bureau chief position from 2000 to 2005 and retired as a supervisor. Pat had a wealth of knowledge regarding the history of the Department of Public Safety and the State Fire Marshal Division. He was a great resource of the life safety code. He participated in the Minnesota State Fair at Governors Fire Prevention Day for many years. Pat was also a member of the Minnesota Fallen Firefighters Association.



**Minnesota Department of Public Safety
State Fire Marshal Division
sfm.dps.mn.gov**

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